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### UM researcher says state fuelwood supply will fall short of demand

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# University of Montana

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## MEDIA RELEASE

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### UM RESEARCHER SAYS STATE FUELWOOD SUPPLY WILL FALL SHORT OF DEMAND

MISSOULA--

Missoula-area residents and industrial firms that rely on wood for heat, steam generation, and in the manufacture of some wood products may soon find their wood supply dwindling and prices going up, according to a University of Montana researcher.

Charles E. Keegan, research associate at UM's Bureau of Business and Economic Research, analyzed the supply/demand relationship of fuelwood in Montana. He presented his findings at a recent Society of American Foresters regional conference in Fort Collins, Colo. The published article will be in the proceedings of that conference.

Keegan said there will be more demand for fuelwood in Montana than ever before, particularly in Missoula and neighboring counties. He attributed the increase to the number of local residents heating their homes with wood, plus industrial firms that burn wood for steam generation and also use the same type timber in the manufacture of products such as pulp and paper.

Keegan said less than 100,000 cords per year met the needs of the Missoula area during the mid-1970s. But more than three times that much wood will be needed each year between 1983 and 1990 to satisfy local demands, he said. Of that amount, private individuals will require one-third of the supply, with industry using the remaining two-thirds.

Keegan said statewide there should be sufficient dead and waste timber from

(over)



State Fuelwood Supply-- add one

logging activities to meet all of Montana's fuelwood needs. But in the Missoula area, high demand could soon deplete the local wood supply.

He suggested that if wood is not available locally, residents and industry would have to pay more for their wood. Other alternatives would be to switch back to more conventional fuels such as natural gas and fuel oil, or in the case of industry alone, cut back production.

He added that wood products firms are currently using new technology to harvest other forms of waste timber to help meet the increasing demand.

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